

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in the Application. Claims 1, 2, 6, and 17-21 have been rejected in the Office action mailed February 20, 2008. Claims 3-5 and 7-16 are objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Claims 1 and 6 are amended, claims 17-21 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 22-29 are added, by this response. Applicants hereby expressly reserve the right to re-file the cancelled claims in a later-filed continuing application. Claims 1, 6, and 22 are independent claims. Dependent claims 4-5, 8-16, and 23-29 depend from independent claims 1, 6, and 22, respectively.

The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims 1, 4-6, and 8-16, and consideration of new claims 22-29, in light of the following remarks.

Rejections of Claims

Claims 1, 2, 6, 17, 18, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kulkarni et al. (US Pat. 6,775,423; hereinafter "Kulkarni") in view of Chen et al. (US 6,823,432, hereinafter "Chen"). Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kulkarni in view of Chen, and further in view of Waldin (US Pat. 6,651,249, hereinafter "Waldin"). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 1 and 6, and any claims that depend therefrom, have been rendered moot by the amendments to claims 1 and 6.

Objection to Claims 3-5 and 7-16

Claims 3-5 and 7-16 are objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the respective base claim and any intervening claim(s). Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations recited by claims 2 and 3, and have amended claim 6 to include the limitations of claim 7, rendering claims 1 and 6, and

dependent claims 4, 5, and 8-16 allowable. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments do not add new matter.

Newly Added Claims

Applicants have added new claims 22-29, which recite limitations similar in many ways to those of claims 6 and 8-16. Claim 22 is an independent claim, while claims 23-29 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 22. Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 22-29 do not add new matter.

Conclusion

In general, the Office action makes various statements regarding claims and the cited references that are now moot in light of the above. Thus, the Applicant will not address such statements at the present time. However, the Applicant expressly reserves the right to challenge such statements in the future should the need arise (e.g., if such statements should become relevant by appearing in a rejection of any current or future claim).

The Applicant believes that all of pending claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 8-16, and 22-29 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner disagree or have any questions regarding this submission, the Applicant invites the Examiner to telephone the undersigned at (312) 775-8000.

A Notice of Allowability is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 6, 2008

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